

The Henry Dunant Center for Humanitarian Dialogue begins its work

THE Henry Dunant Center for Humanitarian Dialogue began its work yesterday with the first meeting of its Foundation Council and the appointment of the Council's President [27 January 1999 in Geneva]. The purpose of the new Center, which has been set up in place of the former Henry Dunant Institute, is to strengthen intercultural and multidisciplinary dialogue with a view to promoting sustainable solutions to humanitarian problems.

Discussions began in 1997 on the future of the Henry Dunant Institute, which no longer served the purposes which its founding members had in mind. Numerous specialists came together to identify present needs in the area of humanitarian assistance and the problems that a new center might help resolve. It emerged from the discussions that, given the challenges posed by the changing conditions in which humanitarian action is being carried out today, a platform was needed for in-depth dialogue on current humanitarian issues.

After this preliminary stage, during which the groundwork for the new foundation was laid, the *Henry Dunant Center for Humanitarian Dialogue* was set up in November 1998.

The new Center will hold informal round tables and seminars on a regular basis in accordance with its statutory aims, which are to:

- develop and strengthen a universal, intercultural and multidisciplinary dialogue in which all players concerned by humanitarian issues can exchange their experiences;
- devise and promote sustainable solutions to humanitarian problems.

A Foundation Council has been set up to enable the Center to achieve its objectives. Its President is Mr. Abdul G. Koroma, a judge at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, and its Vice-President is Dr. Ernst A. Brugger. Mr. Martin Griffiths, Executive Director, is responsible for the administration and daily management of the Center. A Program Committee has also been set up to give advice and make proposals on the best ways to promote the Center's activities, and, if necessary, to assist in carrying them out.

Press release
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